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America's Blood Centers Announces Inaugural Cohort of the Executive Fellows Program

Groundbreaking initiative with Vanderbilt University is designed to strengthen the blood community through a collaborative executive leadership program

Washington, DC – America's Blood Centers (ABC), the national organization of community-based, independent blood centers that supply 60 percent of the nation's blood supply, today announced the inaugural group of leaders selected for its Executive Fellows Program, launched in collaboration with Vanderbilt University's Owen Graduate School of Management. This innovative executive leadership initiative is designed to provide industry-specific, best-in-class leadership training to blood community executives, elevating individuals, organizations, and the nation's blood supply.

"We are proud to announce this exceptional group of leaders selected for our inaugural Executive Fellows Program," said Kate Fry, CEO of America's Blood Centers. "This cohort represents some of the best and brightest individuals across all segments of our industry. Through their participation in this innovative program with Vanderbilt University, these individuals will enhance their own leadership skills and strengthen the entire blood community."

"We are honored to welcome the inaugural cohort of the Executive Fellows Program as they embark on this unique educational journey with us," said Becca Yancey, Managing Director of Executive Education at Vanderbilt's Owen Graduate School of Management. "We're excited to work closely with this exceptional group of individuals, combining Vanderbilt's academic rigor with their real-world experience across the blood community. This program has been crafted with America's Blood Centers to nurture their growth as leaders and innovators, ultimately strengthening the entire blood community."

These 23 outstanding individuals represent a cross-section of ABC member organizations and industry partners. The inaugural class features CEOs, c-suite executives, and senior leaders working in a range of blood center roles, including donor relations, finance, hospital services, human resources, information technology, clinical laboratory operations, marketing, medicine and science, quality, and operations.

The 2025-2026 cohort includes the following individuals:

- Heath Alls, Client Relations Manager, Carter BloodCare;
- JB Bowles, Senior Vice President of Business Development, OneBlood;
- Carlos Cockerham, Senior Director of Information Technology, LifeShare Blood Center;
- Stacey Connell, Senior Director of Human Resources, Community Blood Center of the Ozarks;
- Joy Duemke, Director of Marketing, North America, Terumo BCT;
- Darryl Elzie, Regulatory Affairs Manager, Inova Blood Donor Services;
- Amber Fuller, Senior Director of Technical Services, The Blood Connection;
- Dan Galasso, Chief Financial Officer, LifeSouth;
- Ruchika Goel, MD MPH, Senior Corporate Medical Director, Vitalant National Office;
- Shelley Harkey, Clinical Services and Research Manager, SunCoast Blood Centers;

- Mahtab Khan, Vice President of Finance and Procurement, New York Blood Center Enterprises;
- Kymberlie Kraemer, Manager of Manufacturing Operations and Product Management, The Community Blood Center;
- Jessica Lantz, Director of Quality Assurance and Regulatory Affairs, Bloodworks Northwest;
- Jennifer Lindburg, RN, Vice President, Quality Support Services, ImpactLife;
- Cliff Numark, Chief of Marketing, Vitalant;
- Theresa Pina, Vice President of Operations, Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center;
- Beau Robertson, Director of Blood Center Services, Cerus;
- Bob Scanlon, CEO, Blood Bank of Alaska;
- Grace Sese, MD, Medical Director, Inova Blood Donor Services and Medical Director, Inova Apheresis Services;
- Andrea Sign, Director of Marketing, Communications and Donor Relations, Carter BloodCare;
- Robert Simpson, Vice President of Hospital Services, San Diego Blood Bank;
- Floyd Wilson, Vice President of Biologics Operations, OneBlood;
- Kate Witthaus, CEO, Northern California Blood Bank.

The Executive Fellows Program comprises various components: a Leadership Residency at Vanderbilt University, in-person learning immersions, virtual learning sessions, executive coaching, a capstone project, and a 360 Leadership Assessment. These elements are designed to offer the blood community a comprehensive and tailored learning experience led by faculty members from the Vanderbilt University Owen Graduate School of Management who are experts in healthcare management, strategy, and leadership development. For more information, [click here](#).

Founded in 1962, America's Blood Centers (ABC) is the national organization bringing together community-based, independent blood centers across North America. These organizations operate in more than 1,100 communities and provide close to 60 percent of the U.S. and a quarter of the Canadian blood supply. ABC member organizations serve more than 150 million people and provide blood products and services to more than 3,500 hospitals and healthcare facilities. All ABC U.S. members are 501(c)(3) organizations licensed and regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or Health Canada. For more information, visit www.AmericasBlood.org.

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